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BOOK REVIEWS

Social Education. By COLIN A. SCOTT. Boston: Ginn & Co. Pp. 300.

For a number of years from various sources we have had fragmentary information regarding the self-organized group work which has been inspired by Dr. Scott in the institutions for training teachers with which he has been connected in Chicago, Wisconsin, Colorado, and Boston. Not until the Social Education Congress of two years ago at Boston and the publication of the quarterly which grew out of this meeting did we have any extended report. The book which Dr. Scott has now written affords us at last an adequate statement of one of the most significant contributions to educational organization and administration that has been made in a number of years.

It is recognized that the school, like the state, must be held together whether subordinate groups hold together or not. These latter "should do nothing which is foreign to the real purpose of the state and the state must necessarily be able to check by force any attempt which would militate against it." However, "true responsibility and even obedience of the highest type is felt only when the group as a whole is free." "The group must be capable of going to pieces, a thing it cannot do if it is to depend on the authoritative backing or the constraint of the teacher. Indeed, it is only when it can go to pieces that there is any reality in the effort to hold it together." "The state is not so much an initiator as an active balance of social forces already in existence, a conception quite different from *laissez faire*." "If children are to be trained socially, they must feel the full effects of social causes—not merely of society at large, but especially of the embryonic society of child life to which they belong. They must study these effects practically, and must see to what extent, as social beings, they are real causes themselves. It is on a basis of experience of this kind that they can best interpret the larger and more complex life of adult society and the state."

It is this conception of increased opportunity for initiative, for responsibility for materials and for less mediated effect of results of undertakings that characterizes the self-organized group work. It makes not only for training in initiative and leadership but through appreciation of these it fosters intelligent obedience.

Three chapters are given to the criticism of (1) Abbotsholme—the monarchy, (2) The George Junior Republic, (3) The School and Society—the "Dewey School." In each case the evaluation is an advance upon those that have been made previously. In discussing the "Dewey School" it is refreshing to get above the plane of superficial criticism and to find a consideration of this most fruitful of educational experiments in terms worthy of it. Perhaps no part of the book, however, will be so much subject to controversy, for Dr. Scott finds the stress in this undertaking to have been upon the organization of a more serviceable course of study and he considers that the ends for which he stands did not function as they should have done in the school. When one takes account of Dr. Dewey's frequent statements on this matter, illustrated by the following sentences from an article on "Democracy in Education," published in

the *Elementary School Teacher*, Vol. IV, No. 4, he wonders whether the condition to which the present author objects was not due to administrative circumstances rather than to any other cause. In this article it is stated, speaking of the learner, "To subject mind to an outside and ready-made material is a denial of the ideal of democracy, which roots itself ultimately in the principle of moral, self-directing individuality." "Until the emphasis changes to the conditions which make it necessary for the child to take an active share in the personal building-up of his own problems and to participate in methods of solving them (even at the expense of experimentation and error) mind is not really freed." But Dr. Scott makes clear his general agreement with Dr. Dewey's philosophy of education. In fact this book is on the whole the best means we have of bringing to teachers in usable form the content of the so-called pragmatist movement.

While discussing these type schools it might have been a help if a chapter had been given to the anarchic school of which we have had an occasional demonstration. The position of those who would give over practically all the school life to individual initiative is frankly met in various sections, but the discussion would be even more effective in a concrete case. Another desired addition is a discussion of the various attempts made by Search and others in the direction of the reducing of mass work, also of such contributions as some of the chapters in Dr. Swift's *Mind in the Making*.

After the chapters referred to, there are two on "self-organized group work." These are very suggestive, dealing with elementary, secondary, and normal school experiments. Among other considerations one values the aid these chapters will afford those who are engaged in working upon the festival problem. One of the most valuable chapters is that on "Reasoning and the teaching of science and arithmetic from a societary standpoint." Of the remaining chapters on "Reading, language and literature;" "Manual arts: industrial and constructive work;" "Fine arts," and "The education of the conscience" the second is the least suggestive. The last is a definite contribution to the moral education problem. All of these chapters can be used to advantage in "method" work because the cases cited are "not ideals and do not call for imitation" and "the question of methods as something peculiar to the outfit of the teacher is absorbed into the larger and more practical problem of community life." We need material of this sort.

Apart from this use in normal school and college classes the book will meet a need in teachers' and parents' meetings, reading circles, etc., and ought to have a wide circulation as a most effective means of helping to bring those who are within and outside the school to a better understanding of some of the possibilities of democratic education.

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Homeric Vocabularies. By W. B. OWEN, PH.D., and E. J. GOODSPEED, PH.D.
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906. Pp. viii+62. \$0.55.

The avowed purpose of the book is to "help the student to learn Homeric words in a systematic and practical way." With this in view there are given first Greek and then English lists of words with corresponding numbers, the